

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 SCCT-01 FAA-00 SY-05 CAB-02

CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01

SS-15 NSC-05 L-03 /054 W

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R 300535Z AUG 76

FM USLO PEKING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6273

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 1703

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAIR CH

SUBJECT: PRC AIRPORT SECURITY

REF: STATE 212490

1. NEITHER PEKING NOR SHANGHAI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS HAVE SEPARATE TRANSIT LOUNGES. TRANSIT PASSENGERS AND ARRIVING AND DEPARTING PASSENGERS WHO HAVE COMPLETED AIRPORT FORMALITIES--INCLUDING HAND LUGGAGE CHECK WHEN IT IS DONE--ARE FREE TO MINGLE WITH "UN-SCREENED" PERSONS IN THE WAITING ROOMS AND RESTAURANTS AT THE TWO AIRPORTS. WAITING ROOMS ARE USED BY CHINESE AND FOREIGNERS FOR BOTH INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC FLIGHTS.

2. COMPENSATING FACTORS, HOWEVER, INCLUDE: TIGHTLY CONTROLLED ACCESS TO AIRPORT GROUNDS FOR CHINESE CITIZENS, THOROUGH VISA-SCREENING PROCEDURES FOR FOREIGN VISITORS TO PRC, AND CHINA TRAVEL SERVICE OR PRC HOST ORGANIZATION AIRPORT ESCORTS FOR VIRTUALLY ALL NON-DIPLOMATIC VISITORS. GIVEN THESE FACTORS, IT IS UNLIKELY THAT ANYONE AT AIRPORTS IS "UNSCREENED" OR UNWATCHED.

3. IN SUM THE LAX PHYSICAL SECURITY INSIDE PRC INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS WOULD BE AN OPEN INVITATION TO TERRORISTS IF FOUND ELSEWHERE, BUT IN THE AMBIANCE OF THE PRC'S OVERALL SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS, A TERRORIST ATTACK WOULD BE DIFFICULT.

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